

Informant:	LMP-S1	Spanish
Date:	09-15-01	Mini DV
Interviewers:	Claudia Hernandez and Michael Owen Jones	
Transcriber:	Josué Domínguez	

CH: Well we'd like to continue talking about what we did last time, but before all that, what was your father's name?

S1: Dioquin (Sp.??) XXXXXXXXXX.

CH: And your mother?

S1: Rosa YYYYYYYYYYYYYY.

CH: And you were raised mostly with your mother's family right?

S1: Alone.

CH: right, but the family with which you had the most contact with was hers right?

S1: Right

CH: When we spoke about the time you married your wife, you told me you were 22 and she was 13.

S1: That's right.

CH: Is that the correct ages?

S1: Yes.

CH: And you told me that the first seven years together...

S1: Eleven years we lived together.

CH: But the first seven you lived in her parents or from home to home.

S1: We changed about 20 homes.

CH: Until your cousin lent you some money to buy that house where you were at...how long did you have that house?

S1: it's still there, we will never sell it, it's a memento, we sold chickens and clothes to get the house.

CH: How? You told me that afterwards you sold the house to come here?

S1: I mortgaged it.

CH: Ohhh. But you still have it?

S1: Yes. My in-laws have it.

CH: Her parents?

S1: Yes.

CH: And when you left you were 30 years old, so in the house you lived how many?

S1: ????

CH: Five years. OK, after that time you mortgaged your home to come here?

S1: Yes.

CH: And when you came here, your wife stayed with the children, three right?

S1: Three.

CH: But you had not divorced?

S1: No, we are just separated, here.

CH: So, tell me about when you came over here, you said that Chocho (sp.??) helped you.

MICROPHONE SOUNDS MUFFLED (and he is mumbling)

S1: He found me in Mexicali in the hotel San Carlos. I was crying, because the 'coyote' had already delivered all the people, but he just thought it was about crossing a bridge ??? But it wasn't like that, he took all my money, my pants were all ripped, I was bearded, dirty and very skinny. He took me to the street ??? immigration ??? very drugged and he would say, I have money, everything and you guys are going back to your country, or have them killed, ???.

CH: Where did they leave you?

S1: San Carlos in Mexicali, and the one they call 'el chino', the owner of the hotel, he said, they are 'coyotes' but they told el chino, that that man asked for a job and they said that they didn't want any shit Guatemalans.

CH: The man said that? That's when they threw you the water?

THE QUALITY OF THIS RECORDING IS AWFUL!

S1: I sat on the stairs like this and they threw water on me, ??? ??? this guy entered with this leather jacket, his name is Checho and he asked me what happened, I told them they left me, and he said 'again Enrique with his thing' and he left me, and he asked if I had

money and I said no, he asked if I ate, no I said, ??? and he said what bad guy that guy. He took me ??? and he took us up to pay for the hotel and he took his shirt off and gave it to me and he went and bought me some pants, because I did not have one and a razor, he told me to shave my self. And ??? and that Enrique had gone out and he told him, you son of a bitch, look at what you're doing to people ??? ??? they ???, they went at it, ??? paid for his passage and he said, ??? and so he said no and they argued. He told me that I should not allow myself to be had by them, ??? and so tomorrow we leave he told me, I'm taking to Tijuana to sell tacos, he took me and I didn't even know how to ride the bus, he told me to go to some boulevard or something and I didn't know, ??? a shirt ???

CH: so you ???

S1: Yes, very nice person, because of him I'm here.

CH: You were a bit disconcerted?

S1: I was sick in the stomach, I was really skinny.

CH: The whole trip...

S1: Like a skeleton...bad, bad, bad, and...from there I stayed in Tijuana, and I remember this place where there a lot of people and he told someone there to feed me, I think it was his brother, right there next to the tower in Tijuana. ??? not get lost. And so he took me there and at around 1am he took us out and it was cold and everyone was drinking beers and whiskey, ??? and tequila and I told him that not me, because I felt that if I drank one I would ???, they gathered some ??? in a leather jacket and they took it from him and ???, those with the waist like this here, that was my jacket. I came with that on and a sack, it was cold, and I had a fever and from there we passed and at ??? they said run! Because immigration was coming our way and we rolled down, all the way down till we hit bottom.

IS S1 SITTING ON THE MICROPHONE?

CH: so you sold tacos?

S1: No, I never did.

CH: I thought you said...

S1: He had just said that to that guy but I never sold tacos.

CH: So, how long where you in TJ?

S1: About 6 hours...

CH: OH, so he himself brought you over?

S1: He came through the main gate and a nephew of his brought us over...I remember that the lights from the lamps went like this, and ??? it was the airport.

CH: It wasn't immigration?

S1: ???

CH: should we turn it off? So, you were only 6 hours in TJ and they gave you to eat and a jacket and the guy's nephew...

S1: there were 100, it was a kid of about 10 years of age....

DEFENING BEEP!!!!

S1: So any way...

CH: so the nephew was about 10 and he crossed you? And you saw a light and they said that the light was immigration but it was the airport?

S1: Yes...so they brought me over and we ??? at the hill, and from there ??? we went to San Diego, and they kept us there in like a ???, we slept a little in a ranch and where there is like an orange metro, they crossed us over, running fast and since ????

CH: But nothing happened to you?

S1: ???...afterwards they brought me over and ??? San Diego and from there all the way to the border and they said we could pass, they brought us to Chula Vista.

CH: That's where only white people were?

S1: Just white people eating, and we were hungry, and drinking ??? restaurants.

CH: And where they at the beach?

S1: Yes, at the beach. They made us go dig sand all day, until 7pm at night, ???, with a black jacket and a ??? shoes, ??? so, ??? ??? ??? all day and there someone came back from the border crossing station and all of them passed.

CH: Someone returned to where?

S1: To the border crossing station and then returned and he said that they all had passed, but the ones the paid. The ones that had not paid did not, that was me and another man.

CH: In Chula Vista?

S1: Yes, it was about 9pm and I did not what to do, ??? would pass by, he left and took people to Santa Ana and he came back for me, on the train, at 9pm, when we passed that checkpoint, we went to the bathroom.

CH: The check they were doing it where the trains are?

S1: The nice trains...and we went into the bathroom and they did not check us. In the gasoline station in Santa Ana, they gave us a scare ??? but we went inside a home.

CH: You don't know whose house that was?

S1: NO

CH: Where did he take you to?

S1: There.

CH: In San Diego?

S1: And ???...I stayed there and he was a really nice person.

CH: How long where you there?

S1: About three days. And from there I went to 29th and San Pedro.

CH: He took you there?

S1: His sister and his in-law, I was there for about a year with them and they gave me food because I did not have a job and I did not this place.

CH: On 29th and San Pedro, that's the house of another sister?

S1: Yes, it rented and that's where they left me, and I stayed there for a year...they didn't charge me anything, ??? work...

CH: So here in Los Angeles, in this very same street?

S1: Yes.

CH: After that, when did you begin to work?

S1: I worked all the time, except that here you cant. I went to Exposition and Rudgelia (sp.??) to live with a woman and I lived there when my wife came...

CH: On Exposition and Ruth Herin (sp.??)? You were living with a woman?

S1: Yes, by name Estella, an evangelist, they gave me a bedroom there and I would work on the corner.

CH: And you rented?

S1: Yes.

CH: You had a job by then?

S1: No, I would go to the corner...

CH: For what?

S1: Sawtelle and Pico

CH: what would you there?

S1: What ever came my way.

CH: Oh, you went to the corners where people wait to be picked up...

S1: I worked with a lot of Italian and white people.

CH: And so before going to Exposition and Ruth Ellen (sp.??), you where already going to that corner?

S1: No, from there I began to go, ???

CH: And when you began to work...

S1: ??? homes, carry brick, cement,

CH: And when you began to do that type of work you were able to go get your kids?

S1: Not a lot, they pay very little, and sometimes you work and they don't pay you, especially the Iranian people wont pay you, they make you work all day and they don't pay you, Mexican and Guatemalan the same, they don't pay you. The Chinese I never want to work with them, they will hit you.

CH: When was it that you sent for your family?

S1: I didn't send for them I went to get them.

CH: you yourself went to get them?

S1: Six years ago.

CH: Six years ago you went to get your wife and kids?

S1: No, my wife came on her own, about a year that I came.

CH: SO she came on her own, she paid everything?

S1: Yes.

CH: When she came on her own, whom did the kids stay with?

S1: With her mother.

CH: Around six years ago you got your kids?

S1: I went to get them.

CH: Edwin is the oldest and the middle one?

S1: Byron and Wilmer.

CH: And after working in that corner...

S1: I began to get acclimated, I would ask where the botinacas...

CH: When you lived on Exposition, that's when you began to ask about botinacas?

S1: Yes, because the evangelist woman would always open the door and would not like the candles I had.

CH: So how long where you living with her in that house?

S1: About ???

CH: And after that year why did you leave?

S1: She would get on our case too much because of the candles...??? Carpet ???

CH: And there did you work with a man?

S1: Yes, putting down carpet but doing that in that time was ???

CH: How did you meet him?

S1: I don't remember...he would give me 25 dollars a week, and I didn't eat and I lived in a garage.

CH: But didn't you tell me that your wife had come to live with you when you where in Estella's home?

S1: Yes, but then we went back there...my wife lived in East LA, when she came, I did not know she was there, when I found out I brought her over to Elding (sp.??), there she became pregnant with the girl, and from there we moved with Estella because the girl did not want be born in the garage. But when we went back I no longer lit candles.

CH: To not have problems and all that?

S1: We rented the little house in the back.

CH: And that's how you had the girl, what's the girl's name?

S1: Jessica

CH: Where is she? With the mother?

S1: In Seattle, Washington. She was born here.

CH: How old is she?

S1: 10

CH: And she's with her mother?

S1: Yes.

CH: And so after working in laying carpet, with that man, do you know his name?

S1: Francisco Marroquin

CH: How long did you work with him?

S1: About 6 months, at around 6 months I went back to the corner because ??? I went to the corner and I got a job where I got paid 20 an hour.

CH: What type of job?

S1: Construction, with a company, Jay (sp.??) company.

CH: How much would they pay you? 20 a day?

S1: Construction.

CH: It was better than 25 a week huh?

S1: Yes, because there I became friends with white people, I didn't speak English but we would speak in sign language, but they liked me a lot, ??? homes and I would sweep the whole building, right there on...by Motor there is a street they call Beverly...that's where I worked, that ??? is huge, we worked there and then we went to Motor to make a mansion, there I became friends with Pedro a white guy and ??? of the company and with Michael, and they liked me a lot...??? And I recommended them there so they liked ??? and that guy spoke English so they let me go.

CH: So what did you do after that? How long where you there?

S1: About two years, and they let me go because I took some people.

CH: Why?

S1: Because I did not speak English and they ???

CH: So they were bad workers?

S1: I took them to work there and ????, they would get mad because Friday, the company had about six people, they would do walls and everything, ??? I climbed up top with another guy, we would stand on ??? and the helicopter would drop down the wood, ??? or we would guide the helicopter...one time I fell from the third story, I slipped...

CH: How many floors?

S1: Three, it was sprinkling that day, and we were not supposed to work and they made us, so when I climbed up my shoe slipped...

CH: And you fell on the second floor?

S1: I passed that one and the next and then I hit.

CH: you fell on the third floor then?

S1: Yes, but it was wood and I got stuck ???

CH: Stuck?

S1: But I was skinny then, they would get mad because I did not drink beer, because the company that would give them wood, ??? 300 hours and ??? every week.

CH: And you didn't drink beer and they would get upset?

S1: Yes

CH: And after those two years when they let you go where did you go work?

S1: To the corner again and from there ??? and began to treat us really bad.

CH: And the corner was always, Sawtelle and Pico?

S1: Yes, and he would always want to hit us, he was a contractor and they were making a garage, and this old man of about 92 he threw him on a bunch of nails and thorns, because they were putting in ??? and someone, I think the man, hit it with the hammer and it splintered and he made him look for the splinter in that entire mess, and so I got mad with him and I told him why ??? and we got into a fight, because the helicopters were flying up above, the fire department ones and he told me something about being immigration...

CH: He tried to scare you?

S1: yeah, he said immigration was looking for us and I don't even remember what I told him...

CH: and you fought him?

S1: Yeah and he hit me and I hit him, he hit me with a stick and I chased him with a motor saw...he hit me with the wood on the face and he made me fall and chased him with that...

CH: How long were you working with him?

S1: Only a month because he would hit us too much, he would hit you and ??? hammer.

CH: what a crazy man, and after that you returned to the corner...

S1: ...to get a job, here comes the witch they would all chant...

CH: They already knew that you....

S1: Sometimes I would go 3 times a day to work and they would be there all day sitting down chatting. I like to get jobs very ???. I began to give away amulets to everyone and they all began to work and they were happy, propaganda of the witch they would say. After ??? ??? ???.

CH: And then?

S1: Then we went to a different company, over there in Beverly Hills where the homes are private, they went to show us, it was raining, they emptied a trailer of little rocks and they were making like an embankment, there were no ladders, it just some pieces of wood with some sticks and ??? of the street, with white bottles, oil bottles, ??? bleeding, we had to carry it and we had to shovel the little rocks and fill ??? and we could not take it, having to carry it, we had a lot of blood and calices and when the lunch truck got there the man did not let us buy anything, because we were like 20 and we asked him why and he went off on us and said so many things and he kicked us out...

CH: It was your own money why didn't he allow you to?

S1: He wouldn't let us he said that Latinos couldn't be going around there, ??? the police that patrol the inside, their friends, they even enter with a card and so ??? I ??? or anything of that.

CH: You had a bad experience?

S1: Yes, with Iranian, Chinese, Blacks and Gutemalans and Mexicans, I don't want to work with them, they treat me really bad.

CH: How long were you working?

S1: The ??? people from here, the Italians and the English are very good, people from Germany, France, Many people there are a lot of them in Lancaster.

CH: When did you decide that you needed to have a business?

S1: I had had the idea but after I got another job, right there on the corner, with Fernando, he was consultant, he's Mexican born here, and very nice, he live over there on that street on this side of Sawtelle and Pico, that's where he lived and he gave me work there...on

Exposition and something. He gave me work that lasted 3 years, I was his right hand man and he paid me well and then he brought in his brother and he kicked me out.

CH: Why?

S1: Because Fernando paid me really well.

CH: How long where you with him?

S1: 2 years about. I have about 14 or 15 years here. After I was kicked out I went ??? I already lived in this building at the time, I had already separated with Gloria...

CH: When did you get married with your wife after she got here?

S1: A year after, I took...

CH: Why did you separate?

S1: Because...the laws are weird here...I took...they took 6 and of those just 2 and that was me ??? they paid 22 dollars an hour, it was a ??? in San Dimas, and I would work a lot.

J: So we've been here ½ an hour.

CH: Do you want to continue, we've been here ½ an hour...

S1: let the ??? finish...I worked with some Greeks, very nice people, I left because ??? I left because I did not know how to drive and they needed someone to drive and speak English really well, because we went once to deliver a sofa like that big, up there and I broke this finger, because I moved my hand on the sofa and ???. And he insulted me, called me stupid...

CH: In Spanish?

S1: In English, he told me so many bad things...

CH: But I thought the man was...

S1: Yes he was but we worked for the millionaires, he worked for the millionaires, and ??? broken hand ???, it's over there in Beverly Hills.

CH: Hard work huh?

S1: Very, the doors where too small and they wanted a big sofa to go in without touching, and these are old sofas and they are very delicate and I broke my hand, the sofa is probably worth than my hand but for me my hand is valuable and I stepped out side and went to go cry outside... and so I said that I wasn't going to work there any more, ???

CH: In that time when you told me you lived in this building and you had separated from your wife and you began to do works...

S1: I did a lot of this there...

CH: you did consultations?

S1: Yes, but I would go to the corner, and when the truck would come I would go to work ???

CH: What?

S1: manager, ???

CH: ??? so that you could...

S1: ??? with a key. The manager let me in and the clients and then she said San Simon move down and I did and here I am.

CH: But you already lived there,

S1: yes in 411 then 311

CH: So it was in 311 where you began to give more consultations?

S1: Yes, I lived with these people that were from Mexico and they would pore salt on my candles and they hit me and they broke my nose and my rib, because they robbed all my money.

CH: how horrible, and after that time how long did you work in construction and all that?

S1: ??? always ??? ??? Malibu, all over there I went.

CH: How long did you have this store? When did you establish it?

S1: I don't know, about 5 years...now about 6 or 7 I don't remember.

CH: 311 was the number...

S1: 3511

CH: the building is 3511 and the apartment 311 right?

S1: No, because I moved down to that apartment...

CH: I'm confused.

S1: On the top it was 411 but I didn't work there, I moved to ??? and it was 3511.

CH: And you live alone in the local?

S1: Yes.

CH: With your wife?

S1: No one, when the Northridge earthquake hit I still worked the corner, I would open and work at the corner, I could many things ???

CH: When did you buy this botanica?

S1: I made it!

CH: yes, but when did you buy...

S1: I don't remember.

CH: You don't remember the year?

S1: No, the house is not mine. The place...???

CH: You had spoken to us that you worked...

S1: I worked everything, in the country side, when I worked in the country was when I was over there in Ruth Helen (sp.??) and that's when ??? with the woman. I learned about he country...

CH: When you lived on Ruth Helen and you began to work on the corner, you also during that time would go to work in the countryside? With people from the corner?

S1: From that very spot we gathered, around 5 of us, and we took off, ??? my wife left me because she said that I left her, 3 months I left because there was no work.

CH: 3 months in the country side and

S1: Well since she left me I went again ??? I went to ??? and I brought ??? and then the other one.

CH: So about six years ago you brought he kids? You began to bring them all?

S1: Yes, in one year I brought all three, I went myself to get them, I didn't pay for a coyote or anything.

CH: OK, do you remember when you established your botanica?

S1: Here I don't know.

CH: How long have you had it?

S1: I've been here around 14 years, I've had it awhile, ??? had it and then me and then I passed it on to Adelia.

CH: So you had the botanica and you passed it on to another person?

S1: Yes, to Adelia because I did not have a permit.

CH: Under her name but you still...

S1: I'm the owner!

CH: You are the one that pays the bills?

S1: Yes, it's just that I did not have my paper in order to get permission.

CH: So it was your botanica, except that...

S1: I had it for 3 months without papers and after I got a person that had them, because you need to have a permit, then that person wanted to take my store away from me and so I took it from that person ??? a man. And it's been about three years that Adelia has it.

CH: Who is she?

S1: My friend.

CH: So three years ago you put this botanica under her name?

S1: Yes, because I got sick really bad and I thought I was going to die.

CH: Three years ago?

S1: My sons were small.

CH: Ok, next time, if you'd like, we can begin to talk about how you managed to get some money to rent this place and how you began to work and to establish your business.

S1: With one box of candles. And about 5 rosaries and 5 ???, my counter was a piece of wood like the one San Simon has, I found it on Grand Mercerie (sp.??) and on Pico, just thrown in some apartment...the chair and I never want to get rid of it because millions of people have sat in that chair, I'm never going to through it away, it was broken in the middle and I fixed it...we've just painted it once and ???? and it never breaks, and all my things have come from the trash, ???

CH: Well if they work why not.

S1: Yes, they serve a purpose for me,

CH: So that's how it started?

S1: I would collect things from the trash

CH: What people threw away?

S1: What they threw away, furniture, my bed, my mattress, not until three years ago I bought a bed, I did not have a bed, I slept on the floor.

CH: So next time....

S1: And since ??? or drugs I saved money and when I do something I do it...I'm not in anything bad or drugs, everything I have is because I have ???

CH: OK, we'll finish here.

END TAPE.